

## **Southwest Coordinating Group Meeting November 7-8, 2006**

*1300 Nov. 7, 2006 – NAFRI, Tucson, AZ.*

### **In Attendance:**

*SWCG Members* - Tom Beddow, Leon Ben, Helen Graham, Donald Griego, Dave Lentz, Bob Lineback, Hector Madrid, Kirk Rowdabaugh      *Recording:* Bianca Juganaru  
*Guests* - Cyndie Hogg, Chuck Schmidt, Chad Stewart

*Note new format; all action items are gathered in one place at the end of these notes.*

### **NEW CHAIR PERSON OF SWCG**

*B. Lineback* has assumed the Chair for the next two years. *L. Ben* will be the Vice-Chair. Agency rotation order was discussed and will be added to the SWCG handbook. Term “Vice-Chair” will replace Co-Chair wherever it is found in SWCG documents.

There is a desire to make the meetings more efficient. Discussion of the agenda and the website agenda submission form followed. Bob will talk to Jay about screening items through him or Leon.

### **REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING’S MINUTES**

SEAT Operation’s plan was approved last meeting and will be finalized for 06 and 07 season; changes can be made later if policy updates occur. Bob will work with Aviation Committee to get signed and on the website. Aviation committee is alive and well, there have just been few issues to debate lately.

Would like to have the lead for the SW IR interpreter at the next meeting. The IR interpreters would like a connection with the IMTs, so this will be discussed in person. Sharing the IR interpreters is an issue that needs to be resolved as they are in such short supply. It will also be discussed with the team IC’s at the SW IC AAR.

Note of Business: need to check expirations dates on SW IA MOU; Tom Beddow to do.

### **2006 SWCC CENTER MANAGER DEBRIEFING W/ CYNDIE HOGG**

Suggests, with hindsight, that perhaps the move from PL3 to PL4 should have been made earlier in the ’06 season, due to the WFUs and the amount of fire on the ground. Might have delayed a bit to avoid daily MAC calls. It is noted that calls can be set up at different intervals and don’t have to be daily, but that was not realized at the time.

Cyndie suggested that we might want to adopt the EGB Delegation of Authority to the GACC Center Manager. This would be different from the delegation to the MAC Coordinator, Dave Cummings, who is more of an intell person, rather than someone who manages and makes operational decisions. Items 3 and 5 on the 8/28/06 delegation handout presented by Cyndie may be pertinent to helping in the SW. The SWCC Center Manager acts on the SWCG’s behalf. Some of these two points from the delegation of authority might be incorporated into the handbook as an updated description of the SWCC Center Manager’s duties

Discussion related to revising the MAC call time or splitting IC's from MAC. Prior experiences with morning or midday calls have not worked as effectively as 1800 calls in this region. In years when two calls a day occurred, the morning call was more of a revision of the prior evening's call. The MAC group calls are a bit long. The rationale of having the IC's on the call is to give them the bigger picture outlook of what is going on, and also to encourage their sharing of critical resources. It is good to have them on at the beginning of the call to facilitate communication and coordination. It was agreed that the 2000 calls did not allow enough time for subsequent actions for the next day, and the call will stay at 1800.

The "late season" Fire Use Team vs. Type II team was an issue. When Reinarz Northern AZ team was dissolved as a Type II, it was supposed to be a SW WFU as agreed with R1 prior to fire season. When the Zone board stood the team back up as a T2 Team, there was a lack of communication between NMAC and SWCG. Bob will bring this forward to the GMAC-NMAC meeting.

Policy issue may arise on trading out T2 IC's. Is it a good idea to substitute T2 IC's when sending the team out of GACC? It needs to be decided what rules (Zone, GACC, or NMAC) a T2 team needs to follow when leaving the GACC. There needs to be assurance that T2 IMTs being sent out of region are following the National Mob Guide team configuration standards.

It was decided to separate team operating rules from the SWCG Handbook to make it easier for the teams to follow and have SWCG team info in one place as a stand alone document. The SW will adopt emphasis language preventing membership on multiple teams; this caused an issue several times. Conflicts with shared positions occurred on some of the teams which created a conflict when the second team was ordered. The reality is that we probably only have enough folks to staff 3 full T2 teams in the SW instead of the current 4 that are being sponsored.

Issues came up with the closest forces vs. staged out of regions teams and assignments, when transitions between PL's occurred. Policy will be clarified in the handbook and Mob Guide stating that staged teams in the SW will be first out for that kind of incident complexity, regardless of PL level.

Three Tier Dispatching should be evaluated with an eye to Arizona. Four Tier did a disservice to some of the incidents, particularly with BIA. There is an issue with AIFC dispatching state-wide over other dispatch zones due to geographic overlap; this is what 3 tiers is supposed to prevent. Need to avoid two 3<sup>rd</sup> tier offices dispatching for the same area. Dispatching may change completely over the next few years as a result of ROSS. There are a number of changes in zones occurring, with agencies coming together in dispatch centers. Three Tier analysis is an agenda item for the January meeting.

### **LINCOLN ZONE DISPATCH CENTER**

Chad Stewart (Lincoln Zone Chair), and Chuck Schmidt presented the plan for moving to Three Tier Dispatching in Lincoln Zone. Communication over the mountains between centers not worked, but it seems the technology has improved and this may be corrected. Stewart presented the Zone Board decision for an Interagency Dispatch in Alamogordo with a new name. In the interest of interagency diversification, the Center Manager would be a BLM position in the future. Implementation plan for amending the communications problems is underway so that radio contact would be better across the entire zone. The Roswell/Pecos Valley Dispatch will

close and the positions will be relocated to Alamogordo, once a viable radio system is established. Chad requests that the SWCG pursue sharing information on how people have found solutions to the IT security problems in interagency offices, and also other challenges to combining operations. Kelly Castillo of AZ BLM may be a good contact on the issue due to his experience in NW NM. There will be a letter to NMAC/NFAEB regarding the difficulties surrounding Interagency Dispatch Centers.

### **NWCG UPDATE**

Kirk relayed how NWCG has been discussing the need for reorganizing and taking responsibility for issues other than training and qualification. NFAEB involved. A strategic plan is almost complete.

### **NOV. 27 & 28 NMAC/GACC MEETING**

At the end of November NMAC has asked for all the GACC chairs to come together for a two day AAR meeting for the 2006 fire season. *P. McAlpin, B. Lineback, and K. Jaycox* to attend.

### **THREE TIER DISPATCHING**

SWCG agency members need to gather information on plans that are being developed per the SWCG memo with the Jan. 5 due date. Analysis of these plans needs to be conducted by the SWCG.

There may be a need to be able to reshape some Zone lines. Redrawing the map may be a necessity. The Zones cover more than simply dispatching (Zone Boards, etc) and there may be needs to ask the Zones for additional feedback on their players, difficulties, areas, etc. Consolidation may be necessary among three tier dispatch centers. The field continues to request guidance/leadership on the direction of going three tier. The SWCG will empower the three tier Committee to filter proposals and make recommendations to the SWCG.

San Carlos is pulling out of Southeast Zone to create an Interagency Dispatch Center with the Tonto (Phoenix Zone). Similarly Fort Apache may be joining Apache-Sitgreaves (White Mountain Zone). Safford is looking at a transition plan to be working with the Coronado in Southeast Zone.

### **CENTER MANAGER TERMINOLOGY**

Discussed standardizing nomenclature with other GACCs by changing the SWCC Center Director to the SWCC Center Manager. Center Manager positions below the GACC level fall under IFPM. Kenan recommended that the nomenclature for Dispatch Zones acronyms be amended to Dispatch Centers with the last of the three letters ending in a C.

### **SWFF CREW HANDBOOK**

Changes submitted by Willy Begay to the handbook were discussed, amended, and approved.

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800 Nov. 8, 2006 –

**In Attendance:**

*SWCG Members* - Tom Beddow, Dave Behrens, Leon Ben, Helen Graham, Donald Griego, Cyndie Hogg, Dave Lentz, Bob Lineback, Hector Madrid, Cal Pino

*Guest* – Jerome MacDonald

**INTERAGENCY HOTSHOT CREWS**

Discussion on general management/oversight over IHC, being that they are National Resources. The geographic distribution of the crews within the Southwest Area may not be optimal due to shifting fire activity. Since the IHC's within the Southwest are predominantly USFS, they have final say on how those crews may be allocated. Since the presence of IHC's affects all agencies during fire season, the Operations Committee will examine/analyze crew locations and fire activity. Fire occurrence history within the Southwest needs to be examined along with logistics, crew concerns, and interagency concerns.

The recent R3 IHC meeting was discussed. There were concerns over the IMT's resistance to listen to them, lack of experienced DIVS on teams. Particularly when it comes to out of region teams unfamiliar with the landscape and fuel types. Also, several crews turned down assignments based on the Pocket Guide's guidelines and were placed in cold divisions. Some resources out of the NW have forms that allow the crews to provide feedback on team and overhead performance; they would like to have a similar form in the SW. A meeting scheduled to take place on 11/15 may result in a debriefing paper and proposals to the SWCG next meeting.

Discussion of the pending Prescott FD Type 1 trainee crew. There is a need to follow up with Pam McAlpin on capturing the memo/process in the handbook since there may be another non-federal crew under consideration.

**AZ STATE SPONSORED IMT**

Dave Behrens presents information on the proposal for a new short AZ IMT. It was proposed as a Type 1 Short Team to be sponsored entirely by AZ State based, on the California and Oregon models. If it is a State sponsored team with State employees within the Geographic Area that is not in the National or Southwest Rotation, then provided they can meet qualifications per 310-1 and the National Mob Guide, then the SWCG does not need to be involved and the team can be ordered as a Type 1 Short Team. The team board that manages them has responsibility for certifying that the team meets the standards in 310-1 and the national mob guide, not SWCG. Should they want to be an interagency team, then it will require oversight from the SWCG, and will have to fall under the team guidelines and protocols of the SWCG.

**INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAMS****TYPE I TEAMS -**

Proposed that the Handbook and Mob Guide be amended to clarify that an individual may only be a member of ONE team.

Discussion over the nomination process for Type 1 Team members. There is a concern that there is not a good flow of new people for the teams. SW guidelines will be changed to reflect a tenure of the IC for three years, and team members to be selected annually, (but no change in

IC's for the 2007 season). Suggestion of making a recruitment notice to be put out and more rigorously recruiting for all positions. There is a concern that SWCG has not been fulfilling IMT oversight duties and need to get more engaged. WFU teams need to be added to the SWCG guidance documents. T2 teams are working under the SWCG when they are out of GACC in PL-IV and V.

Performance ratings of SW T1 Teams have not been coming to the SWCG after their incidents. SWCG wants to see them for every incident. Kenan to follow up on 06 season. It was resolved to create a stand alone team management/guiding principles document to gather all team stuff in one place. There is a need to relax the list of paperwork that the teams need to send to SWCG after each incident (it was felt that the handbook list was a bit much). The Great Basin Incident Management Principles document on Team expectations will be used as a model, but customized for the Southwest.

#### **2006 IC AFTER ACTION REVIEW -**

There is a need for an AAR with all the SW IC's, or as many as can be gathered, prior to the SWCG January meeting. *H. Madrid* and *D. Griego* volunteered to take on the responsibility to schedule and facilitate the AAR. (Has since been scheduled for Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>).

Concern was raised over weak performance of an out of region T2 team arriving in the SW unprepared, ill equipped, and inadequately staffed for an incident during the 2006 season. It was not really a T2 team, even though that is what the SW ordered and was processed through NICC. This was discussed by the incident agency with the team before they left the SW. We need to insure our T2 teams are going out of the SW in accordance with National Mob Guide standards. *B. Lineback* will also pass this issue on at the NMAC/GACC meeting.

#### **CHANGE IN THE SW FIRE LANDSCAPE (GRASS FIRE THREAT)**

Due to the long monsoon season, increased grass growth has occurred in many areas like has not been seen in decades. Some sections of the desert that acted as barriers in the past will now carry fire. There are also areas, especially in AZ, where diseased and dead brush has increased the volatility of vast areas. These dramatic changes may cause high risk and more extreme fire conditions than expected in late winter, spring of 2007.

#### **SW AREA INFORMATION COMMITTEE CHARTER**

Revision of charter for the group's membership reviewed by SWCG. Discussion of the Information Committee's overlap with the Prevention Committee. Suggestion to have the Information Committee establish a formal link with the Prevention Committee; charter approved.

#### **WFU AND PLANNING LEVELS IN THE SW MOB GUIDE**

Updates to the Southwest Mob Guide on the section covering Wildland Fire Use and Planning Levels reviewed and discussed and made consistent with the National Mob Guide. SWCC is working on additional changes from the intell section and Center Manager. Changes in the SW Mob Guide for the 2007 season need to be to Bianca in SWCC by Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>. Issues, if any, can be discussed at the Jan. SWCG meeting.

#### **ESCALATING LARGE FIRE COST MANAGEMENT**

Discussion on use of air tanker drops on large fires, as well as delegation of resources on large fires vs. initial attack. Further discussion of huge USFS suppression bill in 2006 and how this will affect the Forest Service. There may be new direction to look at dramatic ways to decrease fire spending. Major changes may be coming. The USFS may have to say “No” to some escalating severity spending in 2007.

### **NOMINATIONS TO S-590 and 520/620 Process**

Review and priority ranking of nominees for S-590 for FY08, including mentoring process was completed. Discussion of L-480 being offered in the SW as well as the nomination and mentoring process for 520 and 620.

### **SWCG TRAINING COMMITTEE**

Charter reviewed, discussed, and approved.

### **GEOGRAPHIC AREA TRAINING REPRESENTATIVE (GATR)**

Discussion on Training Specialists and GATR roles and responsibilities. National GATR charter approved by the group and *Lineback* signed for Jerome to take to the national group.

### **AVIATION AND THE SIT300**

Request amending the SIT300A and to track more aircraft resources, as in other GACCs. Approved in concept; Lineback will pass to Aviation Committee.

### **FINAL BUSINESS**

MOU may be expiring. Delegation of Authority needs to be updated. SWCG Handbook to be revised before January Meeting. Tom Beddow is retiring and this will likely be his last meeting. Bianca will continue to come as SWCG executive secretary so that we have a single person to deal with; it will get easier for her as she gets to know the characters and issues.

## **Action Items - SWCG Meeting - November 7-8, 2006**

**Next Meeting: Jan. 24-25, 2007 Phoenix (Helen Graham to arrange location)**

Topic	Action needed	Responsibility	Date
Consider Great Basin delegation of Authority items for SW use	<i>K. Rowdabaugh</i> to check on the Operating Guide delegations /responsibility of Center Manager to make sure the language is clear and accurate, especially pertaining to bullets 3 & 5 (see handout). Edit if helpful.	Kirk R.	Jan 07
Meeting Management	Pass corrections to Jay for 7/20 meeting notes. Arrange for Chair/Vice Chair to pre screen SWCG Agenda Items	Bob L.	Jan 07
SW Fire Use Teams	Need language built into various SW handbooks, documents and guides outlining the management of the FU teams. Need to explain the second “late season” FU team. See	Dave L. Leon B. Bob L.	?

	below.		
Team Management	<p>Need to take the SWCG policy clarification on freelancing from earlier this year and add to the Mob Guide/team handbook. Standards for T2 IMTs when they go out of GACC need to be reviewed for the team handbook. <i>L. Ben</i> and <i>D. Lentz</i> will draft the team handbook, using the GRBA model. Policy on IMT no sharing of positions needs to be added to the Mob Guide and handbook.</p> <p>Will remove the Handbook section on T1 IMTs and place in a new, separate appendix/team handbook and include the changes that have been discussed: the T1 Teams need to request a rating on every assignment, 1 year tenure for team members. Three year tenure for IC's &amp; Deputies.</p> <p><i>K. Jaycox</i> is creating a recruitment notice for SW Type 1 and Fire Use Teams.</p> <p><i>B. Lineback</i> to contact Type 1 IC's regarding nominations and meeting dates.</p> <p><i>H. Madrid</i> and <i>D. Griego</i> will set up an IC AAR (w/ <i>Bill W.</i>?) and gather feedback from all IC's and present to SWCG in Jan. If anyone has team related issues they would like to see discussed, send to Hector/Donald</p> <p><i>B. Lineback</i> to talk to <i>K. Jaycox</i> on updating the briefing packet for out of region teams, (it was found to be in poor condition this year).</p> <p>Clarification needs to be made on the distinction between preorders and initial orders by teams through dispatch at the dispatchers meetings.</p>	<p>Dave L. Leon B.</p> <p>Kenan J.</p> <p>Bob L.</p> <p>Hector M. Donald G.</p> <p>Bob L</p> <p>Kenan J.</p>	<p>?</p> <p>Nov. 06</p> <p>Nov. 06</p> <p>Jan 07</p> <p>Feb 07</p> <p>Jan 07</p>
Team Management Revision of Mob Guide	Add language to PL guide that states clearly that when the SW stages outside teams, then that team is "next out" when a team is ordered regardless of closest forces or PL level; also place in new team handbook.	<p>Bob L.</p> <p>Dave L. Leon B.</p>	<p>Jan 07</p> <p>?</p>
Revision of SWCG Handbook	The rotation order of chairs (and thus vice-chair) will be: NPS, BIA-Western, NM State, BIA-Southwest, BLM-NM, BIA-Navajo, Fish and Wildlife Service, AZ-State, USFS, BLM-AZ will be added to the SWCG handbook. Add a statement to the SWCG handbook revision relative to periodically reconsider the agency/tenure of the GATR.	Bob L.	Dec 06
Lincoln Zone 3 Tier	Draft letter to NFAEB on interagency dispatch issues and difficulties seeking more national help	Helen Kirk R.	Jan 07

3 Tier Analysis, as plans come in related to the Jan. 5 due date	Agency members to gather their plans and bring to Jan. meeting and copy to Kelly Castillo.	All	Jan 07
	Task Kelly and group with doing initial analysis of agency plans. Good agency boundary map needed. Also, post all plans on SWCG website for all to examine. They will develop recommendations for SWCG.	B. Lineback Kelly Castillo	Jan 07
NMAC-GMAC meeting in late November	Develop/send list of potential agenda items for NMAC to consider. Includes: -the issues surrounding T2 and WFU IMTs. -Another issue would be timing of release of new policies, etc. need to be prior to SW fire season rather than in June. -There are also problems that occur when the SW is PL-3,4 or 5 and the Nation is at PL2 and it is difficult to get Boise's attention. If any GACC is at PL3 or 4 then someone should be available at Boise outside of business hours to process orders. -Inadequately staffed, equipped T2 teams being sent to the SW	Bob L.	Nov 06
Center Manager	Change name of SWCC coordinator to "SWCC Center Manager" in all handbooks and documents	Kenan J.	Mar 07
Renaming of SW Area Dispatch Zones	Continue process to rename all SW area 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tier Dispatch offices. SWCG approves the concept, but asks the center manager to research the implementation workload and initiate discussions with the local center managers to gain their cooperation. Come back to SWCG if major issues identified.	Kenan J.	Jan 07
SWFF Handbook Revision	Latest changes reviewed, edited and agreed to. Convey changes to Willie Begay, edit master, finalize and print/post. Handbook does not need to come before SWCG again until major changes are made.	Bob L. Willie B.	Jan 07
Increasing IR Interpreter utilization in the SW	<i>K. Jaycox</i> to invite the IRIN interpreter representative to the next SWCG meeting.	Kenan J.	Jan 07
	<i>B. Lineback</i> will pass info to the teams at the IC AAR.	Bob L.	Jan 07
IHC issues	<i>D. Lentz</i> to follow up with Pam on getting the memo on the new T1 Prescott training crew.	Dave L./Pam	Jan 07
	<i>T. Beddow</i> to work with the IHCs on issue paper for possible presentation at SWCG Jan. mtg.	Tom B.	Jan 07
	Task Operations Committee to assess optimal location/crew allocation analysis of current IHCs to take place through <i>D. Lentz</i> with a report for autumn 2007 in mind.	Dave L.	Oct 07



AZ T1 Short Team	<i>D. Behrems</i> is to write an informational letter to the SWCG regarding the team for the next meeting detailing their team's status.	Dave B.	Jan 07
Update SW MOU	Coordinate updating the SW MOU.	Tom B.	Jan 07
Revision of SWCG Handbook	<i>H. Madrid</i> to look into setting up a SWCG handbook revision meeting by web based teleconference for December 12, 0900 for all SWCG members. Print the handbook from the website and read and make your edits before the call.	Hector M and All	Dec 07
Grass Fire Threat and other veg changes	<i>T. Beddow</i> to speak to <i>K. Jaycox</i> on the matter of SWCC assessments in form of safety messages and preseason risk assessments from Predictive Services.	Tom B.	Jan 07
Info Committee Charter	<i>Beddow</i> will pass on comments and changes to the Information Committee from the SWCG.	Tom B	Dec 07
SW PL chart update	<i>Lineback</i> to gather and incorporate additional edits from SWCC, then send to SWCG more time before they go into the 2007 SW Mob Guide.	Kenan J. Bob L.	Dec 07
Sit 300 revision, Aircraft tracking	<i>H. Graham</i> to speak with <i>K. Jaycox</i> about SWCCs role in tracking and reporting aviation resources on the web. <i>Lineback</i> will pass issue onto the SWCG Aviation Committee.	Helen G. Bob L.	Dec 07
<b>AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT SWCG MEETING (so far)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IHC Hotshot Issues</b></li> <li>• <b>T1 Team selections</b></li> <li>• <b>Review SW IC AAR</b></li> <li>• <b>Report on NMAC-GMAC meeting</b></li> <li>• <b>Three Tier Analysis</b></li> <li>• <b>AZ IMT Info Report</b></li> <li>• <b>IRIN discussion on IR utilization</b></li> <li>• <b>FUTA Steering Committee Report</b></li> </ul>		Jan 24-25